To Aggie
from
Psi Psi

KITTEN WHISKERS

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Kitten Whiskers

by Caroline Fuller

Kitten whiskers, here and there,
With pictures taken unaware.

Duffield & Company

New York · 1927

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Thanks are due to Mr. Edwin Sanborn of The New York Zoological Society for the use of the photographs on pp. 7, 18, 37, 53, 60 and 93. The others were taken by the author, after wild chases through back yards, alleys and barns. One subject was scooped up by the pound wagon in the middle of a sitting and released only upon payment of a fee.

As the dog had no collar, one was loaned to him by a boy among the interested bystanders.

To Pinkie, the tortoiseshell, brilliant and witty,
Sweet-tempered at times, and at other times spitty.

To Tootikins, timid and brindle and shy,
With such a long tail that you often thought:
"Why?"

To Sherry with brown eyes, and fur golden bright,
In nature, most noble, but too proud to fight!

KITTEN WHISKERS

CATNIP

What makes Grandma ruin hers,
By boiling it, like tea?
Why not spread it on the floor,
And roll in it, like me?

A HOPELESS CASE

I am a wicked cat,
And spread terror where I go;
I scratch and howl and fight,
And am glad that it is so.

I keep the town awake—
Steal everything I see.
I'm not a well-bred cat,
And do not care to be.

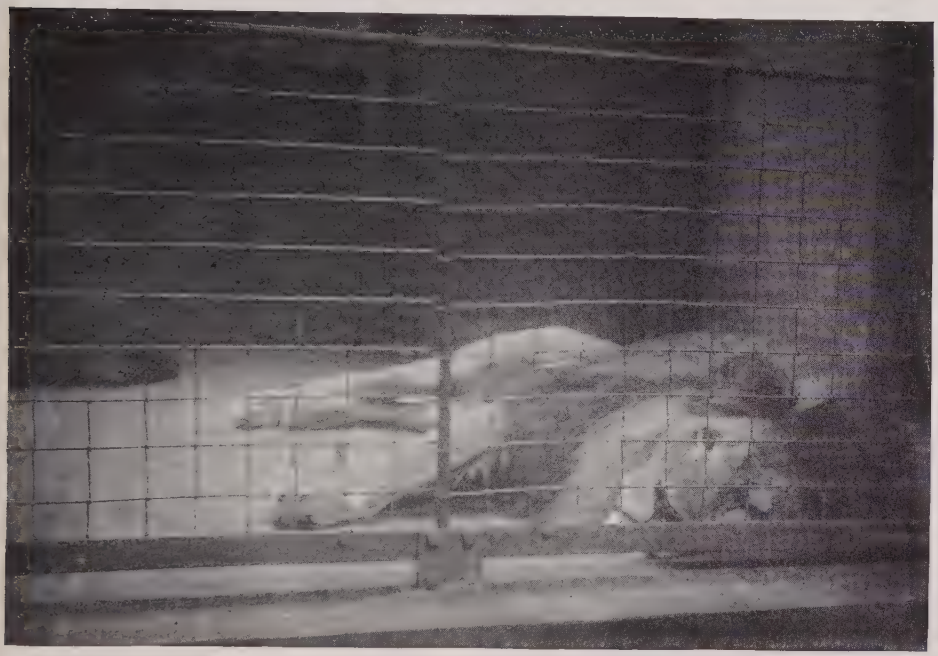
VIXIE

THE WILD LION

We thought that we would go to hear
A lion when he roared,
And listened with respectful ear;
And then he only snored.

"Oh lion, show some pep!" we said,
"For we are getting bored."
He never stirred his golden head,
But merely snored and snored.

To wake him up, we asked, "Shall we
Throw open wide your door?"
He said "It matters not to me.
I'd rather snore and snore!"



OUT OF STYLE

See the clothes that grandma made
For her own cats to wear,
When she was just a little girl. . .
I wish I had been there!

That funny Mother Hubbard dress,
Back in the eighties dated,
The kittens didn't mind so much—
The *drawers* they simply hated.

OH DEAR ME!

I do wish that traveling baskets
Might be made in different shapes,
Why just now a strange man had me,
Who'd mistaken me for grapes!

THE UNMUSICAL FAMILY

I'm taking singing lessons,
And when I strike A flat,
The family says, "O Kitten, hush!"
And everyone cries, "Scat!"

But when I try again to please,
And end up on high C,
They bring some water in a glass
And pour it over me!

COMPLIMENTS

"What a funny nose you have!"
I thought I heard the kitten say.
"You needn't talk," the bird replied,
"Your tail is growing the wrong way!"

A PENNY IN THE SLOT

I've often seen the children find
Nice things to eat, inside this little house,
So if I press the rod, perhaps
There may drop out for me, a fresh young mouse!

MAMA'S BOY

When laughing at my funny neck,
You boys remember, please,
That I can quickly reach and eat
Fruit from the highest trees.

I do not need to climb a hill
To see what's far away,
I look at all the base-ball games
And never have to pay.

My only trouble is that when
My stomach aches a lot,
The hot drinks given me grow cold
Before they reach the spot.

You say I have a funny neck,
Queerer than any other,
But let me tell you, even *my* neck
Looks lovely to my mother.

THE MANICURE POST

I was not chased up here by dogs—
Oh no! I came because
It is the finest place around
To sharpen up one's claws.

A dog is waiting, to be sure
And watching, I can see;
But dogs are playful little pets.
What is a dog to me!

MORNING GLORIES

Kittens are like flowers,
With their funny marks and all,
And the way they have of scrambling
Like a vine against a wall.
And when they curl up roundly
With eyes shut very tight
They might be fuzzy kitten buds
That have not seen the light.

THE FLAPPER?

I suffer so from bashfulness,
I am ashamed to mention it,
But if that strange cat bows to me
I know quite well that I shall spit!

A DISOBLIGING GUEST

If I could only reach that cat
    Who's sitting on our wall,
I'd entertain her royally
    In just no time at all.

I'd give her one decided chew,
    Then chase her through the town.
I hate that smiling, lofty cat—
    She just will not come down!

A HALLOWE'EN WITCH

They say that kitties used to ride
On broom-sticks through the air.
But when I try to ride a broom
I don't get anywhere!

A MYSTERY

I surely laid this Easter egg,
So pray how can it be
That this strange creature just hatched out
Is not at all like me?

THE SOLOIST

What is that strange music, please?
Puss on the piano keys!
And just now mamma was saying,
"No one's home. Who *can* be playing?"

AN EASTER BONNET

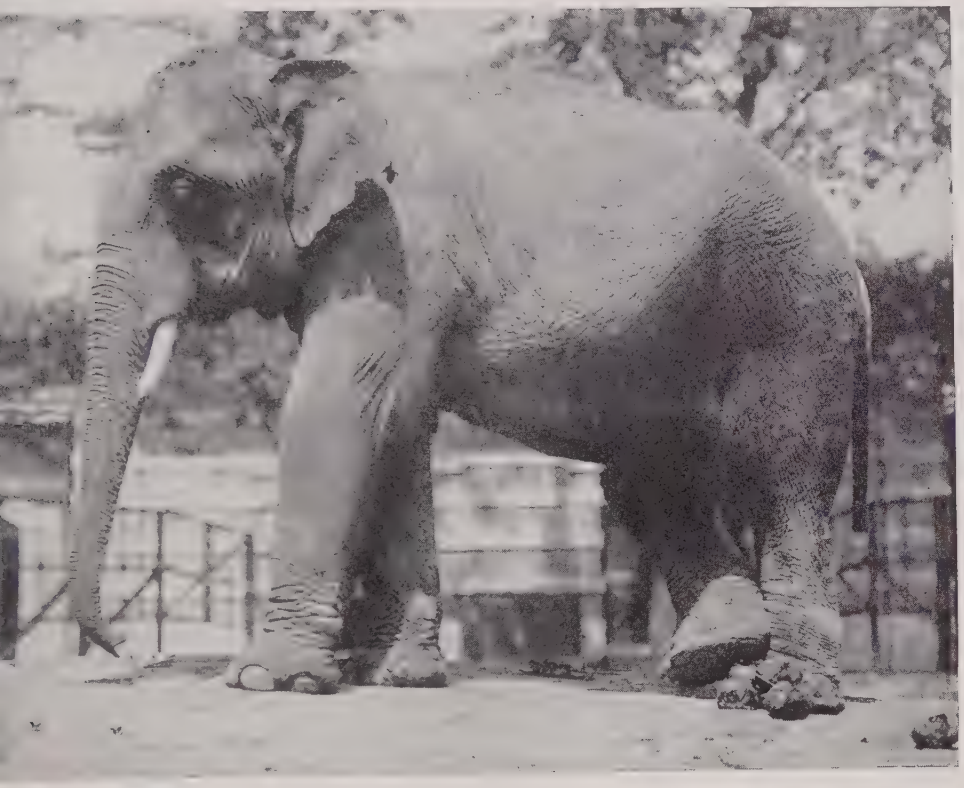
Please bring my gloves and parasol,
And take me for a walk.
I see a friend across the street
With whom I'd like to talk.

WASTED SYMPATHY

We saw the elephant shed tears
As big as barrel tops,
He moaned, and used his flapping ears
For handkerchiefs and mops.

"Oh what is wrong, poor child?" we asked.
"Why are your tears so bright?"
"I weep," he yelled, "I weep because
I've lost my appetite."

"And why did you lose that?" we cried,
"Has some one been unkind?"
"Oh no, I lost it," he replied,
"Because I have just dined."



A CLIMBER

Some people choose the mountains,
With only ice and snow.
But I prefer a curtain,
The pattern varies so.

MOTHER BUNNY WONDERS

My twins are both so well behaved,
So beautiful and fine
I cannot see how people guess
The blonde one is not mine!

JACK-O'-LANTERN

Sometimes while sitting in the dark
We see two round bright eyes,
Like little moons of yellow fire
With Pussy's face for skies.

And outside on the window ledge
Those two moons look as red
As if a little candle
Were lighted in her head.

MY CHICKENS

John Alden is a Plymouth Rock,
His best wife is Priscilla,
She is the fattest of the flock,
But nobody would kill her.

Rose Standish has the sweetest voice
That any hen could need,
But daddy says he would rejoice
To see her fricasseed.

John Alden had another wife,
Quite long ago he useter.
She led him just an awful life,
And then grew up a rooster!

HER DAILY TRIAL

It's very painful to grow old,
    When one has been a beauty,
And find one's visits to the glass
    No pleasure, but a duty!

I'll go right to that barber shop
    Where Thomas-cat is shaved,
And let my tail, which grows too straight,
    Be permanently waved.

THE LIVELY DISH

"Oh Bunny, here's a dish of milk!"
Said Kitten, "Nice and cool."
"Quite nice," said Turtle, starting off,
But leaving,—"April Fool!"

INHOSPITALITY

I look as if I had the mumps,
Because—is it not hard?
I went to call upon the cat
Who lives in the next yard.

He was a larger cat than I
My chances were quite slim;
But if you think I got it all,
Just go and look at him!

A NATTY DRESSER

I wear a robe of snowy silk,
Though I am not a bride,
A lily, or a glass of milk,
But just a fox, inside.

A SOCIAL BREAK

This was a rabbit wedding
With many gifts apiece;
The bride-groom was a spotted gray,
The bride a sweet maltese.

And everything went finely,
Except,—I've heard it said,
The bride-groom ate the orange blossoms
Off the poor bride's head!

A POOR SHOPPER

Most colts are purchased by the piece,
And so, was it not hard,
That when my mother bought my legs
She got them by the yard!

THE KITTEN'S LAMENT

Grandma likes the bunnies best
Because their fur is light,
She says, "A creature is a pest
That does not show at night!"

Once in the dark she tripped on me
And fell downstairs head first,
She seemed to think she hurt her knee,
But my tail felt the worst!

THE BABY WOLF

I look so innocent, like a pup,
But when I am big, I will eat you up,
And then I will swallow a calf or a lamb
To show what a sweet little pet I am!

THE SURPRISE

On my birthday morning,
What d'you think I had?
Two kittens and two chickens.
I tell you I was glad!

One of each was yellow,
And one of each was brown
So that each dear kitten
Had a chick to match her gown.

AN AUDIENCE

I

When my neighbor pussy sings
All the songs that he enjoys,
And the people in the house
Say, "Oh what a horrid noise!"

AN AUDIENCE

II

Then I hasten to look out,
For if no one did, I fear
That our neighbor might suppose
None of us had any ear!

THE SCRAP BASKET

"Dis lil' yaller dog you see
He's 'zackly de same color 's me,
And he's so bligin' in his feelin's
He eats up all my apple peelin's."

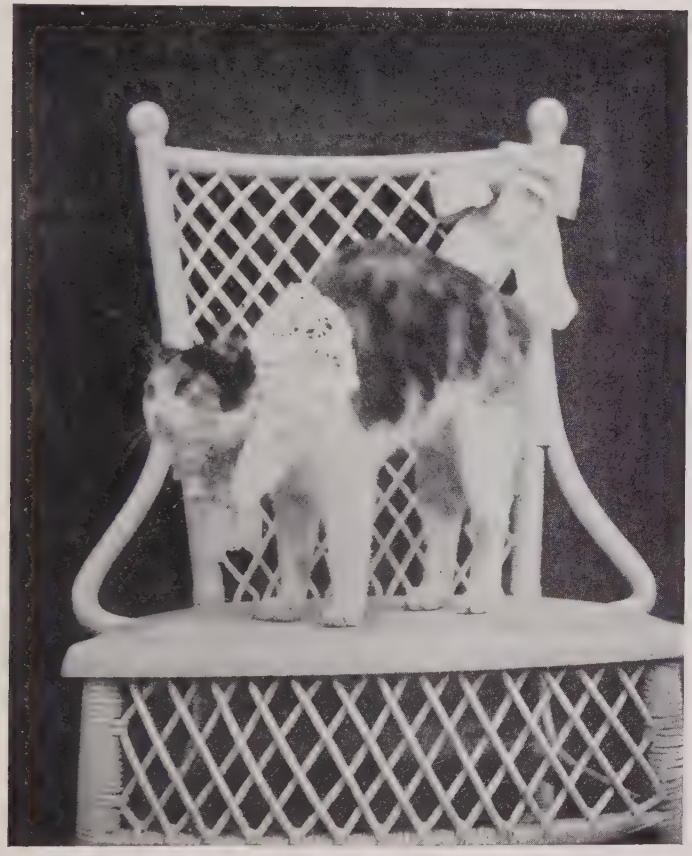
THE FIRST MOUSE

I'm full enough of pride, and growls,
And happiness, to burst.
Because I caught this mouse myself,—
Though mother caught it first!

IN TRAINING

I take my daily dozen,
Like any other cat,
For I could never catch a mouse
If I should grow too fat.

And when I see stout ladies,
Who don't reduce like me,
I really can't help thinking what
Poor mousers they must be.



A GOOD REASON

"Why do you wear your tail so short?"
The kittens asked the rabbit.
"I think, dear ladies," he replied,
"It must be force of habit."

THE POOR LITTLE RICH DOG

I'm a very high-bred dog,
And it's certainly a bore,
For my hair is washed and combed
Till my very bones are sore.

When strange dogs go barking past
I'm not allowed to stir.
I'm a very high-bred dog,
But-I-wish-I-was-a-cur.

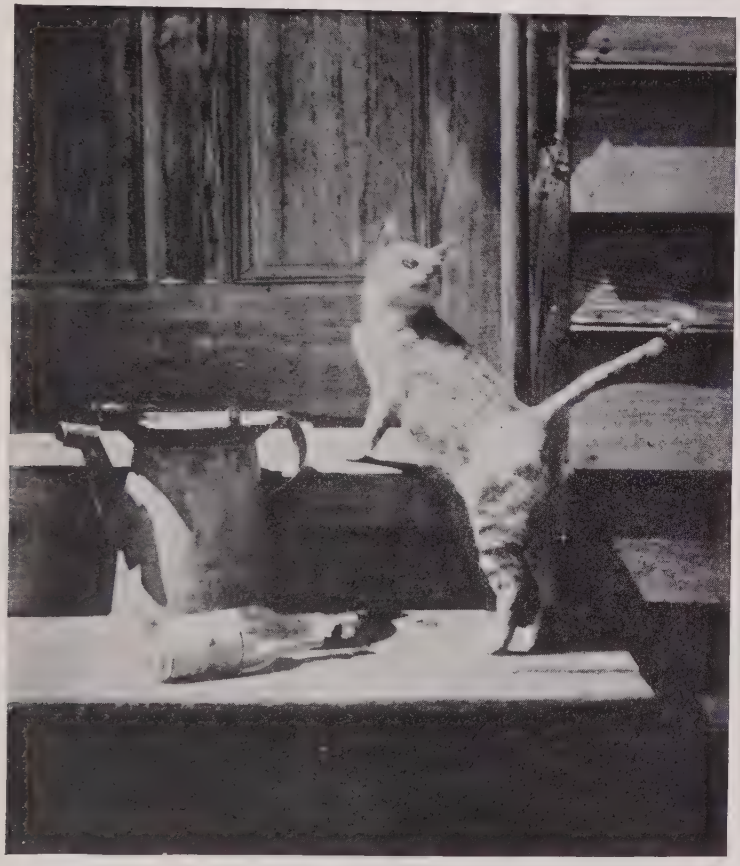
THE BOUDOIR

I own a cosy little room
And no one can unlock it;
A very private little room
In Grandpapa's coat pocket.

One day I went to walk with him.
He said it did no harm,
For when he put his hands on me
I kept his fingers warm!

A THANKSGIVING WAIF

My stomach is hollow and thin,
    My poor legs are tired and jerky;
I don't care a bit for your cranberry sauce,
    But, please, can't you spare me the turkey?



ON THE HOSPITAL STAFF

I am called The Emergency Cat,
And wear a red cross on my tie.
For when ever emergencies come
There is no one runs faster than I!

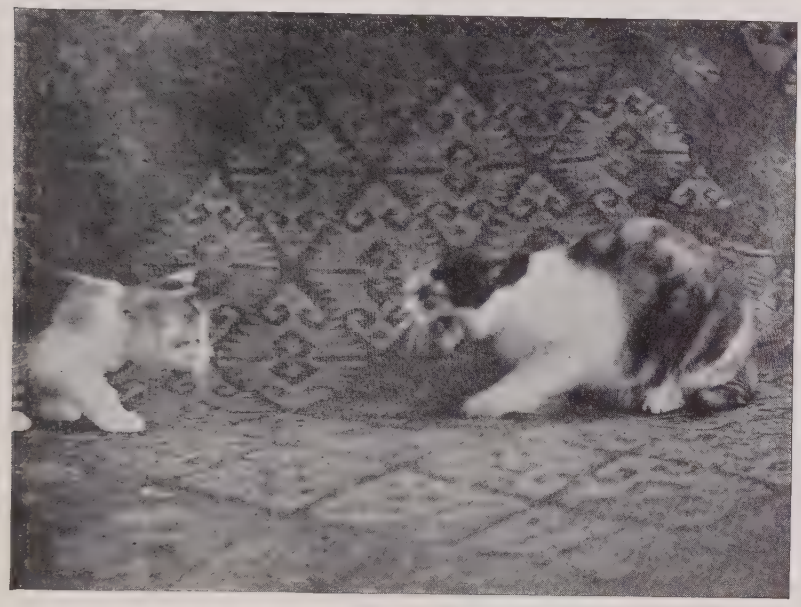
A TOURIST

I've packed my bag to sail away,
For though I dread the motion,
I know if one would see the world
One has to cross the ocean.

THE HOSTESS

Once when we thought it would be nice
To give our cat a party,
Her greetings to the guests that came
Were anything but hearty.

Even the sweetest one of all
Who should have made a hit,
And really looked quite like herself—
She greeted with a spit!



HER PRIVATE OPINION

Pussy sits with scornful face
Looking at the bunny;
"Yes," she thinks, "He may have grace,
But aren't those long ears funny!"

"And what a silly little tail!
Far too short to swing,
Why he might chase it all day long,
And never catch a thing."

PANSIES

Pansies are the kittens
Of any flower bed,
Although they wear no mittens
But only leaves instead.

And can't you hear the roses
When waked by noise at night
Say, while turning up their noses,
"Oh, that's just a pansy-fight!"

"I LOVE LITTLE PUSSY!"

This kind father lion has eyes sweet and mild,
Which say that he loves you just like his own child!
Some lions are hasty in temper, when fretted,
But this one's a darling, and wants to be petted.

PINKIE, THE FRIEND OF A CHILD

A little face of tortoise-shell, and little form most sweet
Glide down my paths of memory on little pink-toed feet.

One paw half white in yellow sleeve,—another, bronze and gold,
A tail whose tender scornfulness could many hearts enfold.

Through all the years, I carry yet the comfort of your purr;
You offered, when my cheeks were wet, a handkerchief of fur.

We romped and played till motherhood brought aging cares to you,
And then I think you understood—I was a kitten, too.

If Heaven is a place where friends who dearly loved, may meet,
My kitty'll run to meet me there, on little pink-toed feet!

THE END